

What Is Claimed Is:

1. A method for activating restraining means, a crash type which is derived from a signal characterizing the crash being taken into consideration during the triggering of the restraining means, wherein the crash type is ascertained by analyzing signal values and slope values of the signal characterizing the crash using threshold values.
2. A method for activating restraining means, the triggering of the restraining means occurring as a function of the crash severity, wherein the crash severity is derived from the crash type and information about the velocity of the vehicle.
3. The method as recited in Claim 2, wherein the crash type is ascertained according to the method as recited in Claim 1.
4. The method as recited in Claim 1 or 3, wherein the threshold values are predefined as a function of velocity.
5. The method as recited in one of the preceding claims, wherein the velocity is the relative velocity of the vehicle in relation to the obstruction before the impact.
6. The method as recited in one of the preceding claims, wherein the threshold values are established in such a way that in the event of a specific crash type, the threshold values are intersected at an instant predefined for this crash type.
7. The method as recited in one of the preceding claims, wherein the threshold values are calculated either

discretely or continuously as a function of the velocity, the crash type, or both.

8. The method as recited in one of the preceding claims, wherein if at least two crash types are ascertained, the hardest is assumed as the crash type.
9. The method as recited in one of the preceding claims, wherein the maximum slope value is retained.
10. The method as recited in one of the preceding claims, wherein the threshold value for the slope value is defined in such a way that, at the instant at which the signal value exceeds its threshold value in the event of a soft crash, it is less than the slope value for a soft crash.
11. The method as recited in one of the preceding claims, wherein the threshold value for the slope value is defined in such a way that the exceeding or falling below occurs or has occurred when the signal value exceeds its threshold value.
12. A device for activating restraining means, having a control unit which considers a crash type, which has been derived from a signal characterizing the crash, during the triggering of the restraining means, wherein the control unit is implemented in such a way that the crash type is ascertained by analyzing signal and slope values of the signal characterizing the crash using threshold values.
13. A device for activating restraining means, having a control unit which triggers the restraining means as a function of the crash severity, wherein the control unit is implemented in such a way

that the crash severity is derived from the crash type and information about the velocity of the vehicle.

14. The device as recited in Claim 13, wherein this deriving may be performed either discretely, continuously, or discretely-continuously.